

I Am Resolved Colossians 3:1-4

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

God has wonderfully given us this _____. What have you _____ with it and what will you _____ with the coming new year? Today we're going to find ways to draw _____ to God. When you consider how much God _____ us, it's only fitting that we give Him the full measure of our love and devotion.

As we think about this past year, let me say _____ to each of you, our viewers. Your encouragement, prayers, and kind words have truly lifted our _____. You've made this year wonderful and we expect nothing but _____ in the coming year! Each day we live is God's _____ to us, and how we use our days is our gift to God. God didn't create us to _____ our lives in things that don't matter. He wanted to _____ us and to be close to us. He wanted us to _____ His love and _____ His grace. He opens His heart to us so that we might have forgiveness of _____ and the peace that passes understanding.

This time of year, people make resolutions or commitments to _____ their lives. Some vow they will lose weight; some change their diet; and some _____ bad habits or start good habits. The best thing we can do to make life _____ is to go back to the basics of drawing close to God. I want to challenge you today to _____ yourself and rebuild your spiritual life if you need to. Build your _____, build your _____, and build your _____! Make this a year of growing _____ to God!

Our reading today comes from Paul's Epistle to the Colossians 3:1-4.

As we think of this year coming to an end, it's fitting for us to examine our _____. Do we _____ the Lord? Do our words and lives _____ Him? Can we say that we're _____ to the Lord today than we were this time last year? **Read 2 Corinthians 13:5-6.**

We first need to honestly look at _____. Let's put aside pretense and look _____ into our hearts. We'll probably _____ things there that we don't like, sinful thoughts and behaviors for which we're ashamed. It's time to put away our pet sins and to _____ from our hearts. Those who are outside of Christ need to become Christians by _____ the gospel; and those who are members of the Lord's church but have strayed away need to come home, asking for forgiveness from the Lord.

Once you've made your soul right with God, and we'll talk about how a little bit later in this program, you need to _____ some spiritually healthy habits. The second thing is to begin _____ your Bible every single day. Sadly, many Christians have _____ read the Bible all the way through. The Bible says, "Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of

the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you've tasted the kindness of the Lord" (1 Peter 2:2-3). Reading the Bible is how we _____ to God, how we come to know Him, and how we learn the way to _____ Him. If you follow the yearly Bible reading guide that we have online at searchtv.org, you can read the whole Bible within one year.

Reading the Bible will build your _____ in Jesus Christ. **Read John 20:30-31.** The more you study God's Word, the _____ your faith will become. Faith still comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God, or the Word of Christ (Romans 10:17).

Read Psalm 1:1-3. I hope you understand that God's Word is not merely a _____ to right and wrong; it's also the _____ to blessing. God teaches us what is _____ in order to bless us and to prosper us. God knows what's best, and He gives us the Word to _____ us in the way that brings blessing.

Third, begin _____ again. Pray humbly, fervently, and regularly. First Thessalonians 5:17 says, "pray without _____." This is not suggesting that we pray _____ hours a day; nobody could do that. The Bible here says here we should not _____ praying. Some people quit for days on end. They pray on _____ or when they're with others, but they've ceased praying on their own. Your Father in heaven wants to _____ from you. Don't stop talking to Him.

Jesus, the Son of God, needed _____ with the Father. The Bible says, "But Jesus Himself would *often* slip away to the wilderness and pray" (Luke 5:16). God wants to hear from you, too. You don't have to _____ Him to listen to you. Prayer was God's idea. Some religions think God is too _____ to listen, but God is like a father who _____ about every aspect of His children's lives.

Read what the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:7-11.

Prayer is how we give _____ to the Father. It's how we, as Christians, ask for _____. Prayer is how we seek _____ from the Father for ourselves and for our loved ones. Prayer is how we pour out our _____ to the Father when we're hurting or afraid. Prayer is how we grow intimate with God. If you want to transform your prayer life, take a few _____ before you pray and think about the One to whom you are speaking. You're talking to God, the _____ of the Universe, who made you, loves you, and cares deeply about every aspect of your life.

When you pray, ask in _____. I don't believe in my praying; I believe in God's _____. I believe in the _____ of God who hears my prayers. **Read what the Bible says in James 1:5-8.**

Fourth, start attending _____ regularly. **Read what the Bible says in Hebrews 10:22-25.** We need the _____ of brethren to keep our faith and our love strong. Worshiping God at church regularly keeps our hearts _____ on God. We take the Lord's Supper each Lord's Day to _____ what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross,

sacrificing His body and blood for us. Singing, and praying, and hearing the Word preached helps us to _____ God in our hearts and to learn of all His love. Giving of our means allows us to demonstrate our _____ to God. Worshiping with the church is _____ to keep our faith and our love strong! Oh, how we need to do that!

Fifth, let's live with moral excellence or _____. We don't hear much today about virtue or moral excellence, but God _____ moral purity and righteousness. Living sexually pure lives, paying our bills, keeping our word, and treating others as we wish to be treated, these are all _____ of faith and devotion to God. Christians live godly lives because they love Christ and they want to do what is right.

The Bible urges us, "For this very reason, make every _____ to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge" (2 Peter 1:5). Romans 1:29 teaches us to "Abhor what is evil; and to _____ to what is good." The Bible teaches us to "examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; _____ from every form of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22).

First John 2:15-17 says, "Do not love the world or the things that are in the world. And if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that's in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever." How we live matters to our souls because _____ is offensive to God; it's always been offensive to God, so let's live as people who love God and show it by our _____ lives.

Number six, let's imitate Jesus Christ by _____ others. The Bible urges us to "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and to weep with those who weep" (Romans 12:15). We should be loving and compassionate to those who are in _____. Galatians 6:9-10 says to the churches of Galatia, "Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will _____ if we don't grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to _____ people, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."

The world identifies us as followers of Christ by the _____ that we show one another. **Read what the Lord Jesus said in John 13:34-35.** Acts of love and kindness open the _____ of faith to unbelievers, and that's why we need to do this. When we are able to give love, and they see our love, they become _____. They're more willing to _____ about Jesus Christ.

The Bible points us to our _____ over death and sin in the resurrection and urges us, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the _____ of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58). When we're _____ serving God, God smiles on us. Our labor isn't _____. God

_____ those who put their trust in Him and serve Him by serving others. Christians serve because they know the goodness of God and they want to be _____ Him.

Seventh, let's _____ others to serve the Lord Jesus. Nothing you'll ever do tomorrow will be more important than _____ the gospel with someone who is outside of Christ. One way that you can do that, of course, is by encouraging them to _____ the SEARCH program. There are many other ways, but this is one of those ways and we hope that you'll _____ your friends to watch the SEARCH program.

Christians are responsible for _____ the gospel of Jesus Christ to others. **Read Matthew 28:18-20.**

That's why we _____ the good news about Jesus Christ. That good news about Jesus Christ is too _____ to keep to ourselves. We've got to tell everybody, everywhere about His _____ and His _____. Jesus died on the cross for our sins to _____ His love and grace to everyone. God raised the Lord Jesus from the dead to give us a living _____ and to demonstrate once and for all that He is the Son of God. Christians tell the great story of His death, burial, and resurrection because they know the gospel is what people _____ most in life.

Money won't last and youth vanishes, but God's _____ last forever. You can count on them. Only the blood of Christ can _____ you from sin; only the Word of God can _____ you to righteousness; and the Lord's way is the _____ way that leads to heaven. So let's follow Jesus.

;Build your faith; build your hope, and build your love. Do this to make the coming year the _____ it can be! **Read what Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3.** Can these words be said about you? Can those who know you well _____ that you have faith, hope, and love? Do they _____ God for your work of faith, your labor of love, and the steadfastness of your hope in our Lord? Do your friends see Christ _____ in you? Do they _____ the love of Christ, the joy of your salvation, the peace that passes understanding, and the hope of heaven in you? Have you spiritually matured _____ in the last year?

How you nurture your _____ this year will make a difference in your relationship with God and in how you live your life. Will 2016 be a year of spiritual improvement or decline?

If you are not a Christian, you can become a committed one today. Believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Turn your heart and life from sinful ways to living for Christ; that's what repentance really is! Confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God in the presence of others. And be baptized, immersed in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Baptism is when the old man of sin is crucified with Christ, so that you may be free from sin (Romans 6:3-7). So live every day faithful and devoted to the Lord. And don't let anything come between you and the Lord.